

## **Maine *Learning Results* Review Advisory Committee**

**Minutes—June 9, 2005**

**9:00-3:00 PM**

**Cross Building, Room 105**

**Present:** Anita Bernhardt, Becky Berger, Jon Geiger, Janice LaChance, Deborah Howard, Bette Manchester, Ellie Multer, Nancy Perkins, Patrick Phillips, Valerie Seaberg, John Wright, Brian Doore

Meeting Goals: There are 3 goals for this meeting: (1) Provide an update on the work; (2) Review and provide input for Rider A and materials for the June summit; (3) Identify the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and strategies to ensure their integration into the review work. The last goal was identified by Anita as the most important piece of the day's agenda.

### **Patrick started with an update.**

Informational letter 135 has gone out to all school Superintendents. The focus of the LR and the extent of the MDoE's participation are shifting. Many things will be happening simultaneously and in an interrelated manner in the next phase.

The next phase of the LR will give greater flexibility to local systems as well as require greater accountability for producing results. The DoE will be an active participant in local school improvement. Responsibility for school improvement needs to be more evenly distributed. What needs to happen at the school level? District level? State level? The LR are necessary but not sufficient to ensure that goals are met by all. More effective systems need to be in place to assist the next iteration of the standards.

Patrick announced the outlines of LD 1424 which will allow the DoE to participate more fully in the review process that local systems must undertake. The review process will be formative and shared, but the DoE will also make a judgment about where a school system might be in aligning curriculum with the standards. The Legislature thinks more input is desirable so that there is comparability across the state as far as what students are getting.

Ellie raised the concern that what is being taught is not what is in the LR. How will DoE control for this? The Surveys of Enacted Curriculum work indicates that curriculum is not matched to standards.

Patrick—the self-assessment by districts will include content. The role of the MEA was also strengthened in rule (not statute) so that MEA scores can be compared to LAS results. If there is a discrepancy between MEA scores and LAS results in a particular district, the DoE might proscribe that the district give the dept. more details about their curricular alignment with the LR. Information about classroom practices may also be sought.

Ellie—Is there any way to encourage this without the DoE?

Bette raised the issue that people are not always aware of what they don't know. She has observed content taught in middle school that she deemed more appropriate for younger students. Not the individual teacher's decision, but a school-wide decision on which textbooks to use when. Teacher and district self-reflection is critical.

Patrick reiterated the importance of connections between all the parts of a standards-based system and the dangers of treating parts in isolation.

A discussion followed on impediments to change in schools, particularly regarding culture and belief systems. The importance of leadership with regard to encouraging buy-in was emphasized. Michael Fullan's book on leadership and sustainability was recommended to the group by Bette and Anita.

**Anita gave us updates and information about the day's work.**

First, Anita announced that she clarified the differences between technology education and technology for instruction (see minutes from 5-5-05 for a comprehensive discussion on this topic). The Select Panel convened by the State Board of Education will permit the Review to consider these implications.

Today our task is to clarify and organize information from a variety of sources about 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. We need to be really clear about what those are so that the content area panels have a clear idea as they start their work.

Further updates: Anita continues to receive supportive feedback on the LR Review Committee's work from the LR Steering Committee. She also noted that the Chancellor's Committee on College Readiness was about finished with its work, and that we will receive that report when it is completed. The leadership of the U Maine system and the Community College system will meet with the Commissioner's Office to address the opportunities and obstacles provided in a seamless PreK -16 system. Patrick mentioned that the U Maine system announced that it would be assessing 11<sup>th</sup> graders in math and language arts for college readiness.

Next Anita passed out a copy of an e-mail that will be sent to the Technical Advisory Committee soliciting their input as we continue our work.

**Content Area Panel Updates**

Ann Shannon of the NCEE has been approached to serve as the math content area expert. She is familiar with the math content standards in a number of states and comes highly recommended for this type of work.

Sheila Burke has been contacted for the ELA content area position. She has worked on the International Baccalaureate program and has also worked for Achieve. Her focus is on exit skills for all students. She has knowledge of other state standards also.

Health/PE is currently less defined. Anita was able to put together a list of names who showed up on multiple lists, but people are highly-committed due to a redesign of curriculum national Health Curriculum. She has contacted David Lohrman and Barbara Pateman, but does not know at this time if they are interested or available.

**Discussion of Learning Results implementation summit to be held on June 23 and 24.**

Anita mentioned that there will be a sizeable representation from the Maine Learning Results Review Advisory Committee.

Two questions of importance:

1. What have we learned?
2. What do we do in the next phase that will enhance the likelihood of success?

Questions need to be sharply defined—why is it that we are doing this? The facilitators will be Dick Card and Carol Wishcamper. The protocol for discussion will be based on topics that are generated and added to as people sign up for groups. Hopefully the discussions will lead to a roadmap of what we need to take on the journey.

The group then engaged in a discussion of issues that need to be considered as we continue the work of LR review. Highlights:

1. There are concerns that not all people are on the same page about standards. Nancy: There is an assumption that all people know (about standards) and I'm not sure they do. Patrick acknowledged the need for a broader understanding of what this paradigm shift is about, perhaps with a PR campaign for business, parents, etc. Bette: What are some things we shouldn't be taking for granted?
2. Janice: The parent hat and the parent group hat—where are they?
3. Problems of definition throughout the LRs: Are they content or performance standards? When performance is defined, words are subjective and understanding may not be comparable i.e. sophisticated understanding, a common phrase on the LAD site, may mean different things to different evaluators.
4. Patrick: The MEA will have a stronger role as a calibration point. There will be a de-emphasis on the technical standards that had been a hope for comparability in the LAS.
5. How can we make learning adaptive over time and make the LR responsive to global and cultural changes?

BREAK

**Education, Technology and the Future of Maine's Economy: Conference Proceedings of January 24 & 25, 2005—reading and discussion of the document, pp. 10-22.**

Prompt: Based on what we have discussed so far in this conversation, is there anything this document does not address? We are using this document as a starting point in the discussion of vital 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. (Note: Pages 10-14 were remarks made at the conference by Alan November, Willard Daggett, Marc Tucker, and Seymour Papert. Pages 15-21 summarize the discussions that took place around these presentations.)

Members from the Learning Results Review Advisory Committee who were at the January conference shared their insights about the accuracy of the report with regard to their recollection of the conference. The consensus was that the summaries of the presenters' remarks from the first day were well done, but the context and depth of the discussions from the second day were not well-captured in the bulleted format. John W.: Appendices as structured wash out the cohesiveness and complexity of the contributions. People were responding to what they heard the day before. It was generally agreed by conference attendees that the list needed to be organized with emphasis on important points that were made.

**A far-ranging discussion ensued that touched on school-related issues that are not necessarily addressed by standards.** The issue of motivation came up. What do we do about kids who have personal problems that interfere with their ability to learn? Where do we teach kids how to learn?

Patrick noted that the envisioned document (new LR) has implicit assumptions that it will provide examples of learning that are more authentic and engage students more and focus on meaningful, important content.

Janice raised the issue of what we value, and encouraged us to value choices other than going on to college for our high school graduates.

Valerie noted that we are on a pathway into the future where all kids will be expected to go to attend college whether it is two year or four year. We can't accept anything less. We have to expect seamless K-16 education.

**Skills pulled out of the January presentations and other documents:**

Literacy

Self-directed, self-motivated, reflective, meta-cognitive

All students college ready

Real life part is the venue, not the experience. Make room for failure and the learning that accompanies it.

Resilience

Risk-taking

Character building—how much and how to do it? Motivation and grappling with problems?

Creativity-innovation

How put in measurable terms?

(Patrick then asked that we consider the issue of contexts of learning. This led to more wide-ranging discussion.)

Issues raised:

Creativity within a standards-based system and what happens to it.

Context as well as content of learning.

Attention to attitudes, behaviors, dispositions of mind as well as skills.

Students need to be capable of conceptualization.

Students need to be fearless learners and communicators—comments made about the absence of this in the present system. Students feel they always have to have the right answer, and it does not lead to a mentality where you learn from your mistakes. We don't value struggle as a learning tool.

Types of literacy—computer, Internet, content, graphic. John W. raised the point that we are interested in information literacy, not computer literacy.

Necessity of having a “real life” component to what students are learning.

Needs to be support based, with commitments by administrators, teachers, and other sources.

Anita asked us to think about the structures that need to be in place to support this.

Entrepreneurship connected to the economy and marketplace. Use of systems theory.

Idea of ethics and personal values—where is this emphasized? (Ellie's point)

## Lunch

After lunch, we continued the discussion about experts' opinions on skills for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and what it should look like. Patrick drew a diagram and the group contributed thoughts and suggestions. See below.

In the second iteration of the Learning Results, what should be different? How will it look on the ground in classrooms? How will it get transmitted to teachers? Important skills may become the basis for context work as they may cut across disciplines. How can we reflect our commitment to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning?

The following comments about delivery were made:

Use of a website will be crucial. The “new” LRs will be on the web with links to skills, learning context, etc.

Perhaps a demo video can be made that shows its application in the classroom.

Parents can go to a web site and see what could/should be going on in classrooms.

We will have video, web connections, digital connections.

The importance of getting to professors of education was noted.

The following are remarks that came out of a discussion of content vs. context:

If you have a good problem, it will drag the content into it. Getting the context right is the most important thing I think we can do.

If you teach problem solving, you will bring in the content.

How will commitment to standards not interfere with creativity, independence, adaptation, etc.? Can't throw baby out with bath water.  
Nancy raised a caveat about courses delivered on-line. Not all on-line coursework is of the quality we would desire.

**The Road to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning: A Policymaker's guide to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills**

Anita asked us to consider how this document overlapped with the document we looked at in the morning from the January conference. What were the areas of agreement among Alan November, Mark Tucker, Seymour Papert, Bill Daggett?

The following was the list we generated:

- Need for problem solving
- Need for communication skills
- Command of knowledge and the ability to connect it to other areas
- Real problems in real contexts; deliver meaning in and out of schools
- Motivation
- Need for interpersonal skills (new)
- Ability to tolerate ambiguity (new)
- ICT literacy
- Technology
- Literacy across disciplines
- Math to the level of Algebra II for access to higher paying jobs
- Ethics (new)
- Global awareness, economic, business, financial, civic literacies (new)
- Reflective
- Self-motivated
- Rigorous standards
- 21<sup>st</sup> century learning needs 21<sup>st</sup> century assessment—what are the implications for TAC?
- Teamwork

The term “new” in the above list means that the group put this down as a necessary component of our work, but it was not necessarily spelled out in the material from the January conference.

Next we looked at a synopsis of a book by Richard Murnane and Frank Levy entitled *Teaching the new basic skills: Principles for educating children to thrive in a changing economy*.

They divide the necessary skills into three categories:

- Hard skills such as math, problem solving, higher reading levels;
- Soft skills such as ability to work in groups and make effective presentations;
- Ability to use computers to carry out simple tasks.

Anita will put this in a list for the next meeting.

**We discussed what Anita will share with the June 23-24 summit.**

Suggestions were offered about Rider A, specifications of work to be performed by the content area experts. Anita wants to be able to share with the panels what is going to the experts. Suggestions were:

Be available to consult by phone as needed;

A specific ending date should be agreed upon;

Be available for additional travel to Maine;

Keep in mind the unique attributes of our state;

Materials coming out of the review need to be copyrighted;

Need to review the current LRs as they make suggestions;

Try to supply a cognitive level for Performance Indicators in the LRs;

We looked at a tentative agenda for the content area panel meetings on 7-22, 8-10 and 8-11. The third day is very open as Anita can only guess at the issues that will carry over from the second day. Flexibility is key!

The next meeting is July 6, 2005. Bette Manchester will record the minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Berger